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SUBJECT: KMT: PRC'S CHEN YUNLIN AND MAC JOSEPH WU COULD MEET

Classified By: Director Stephen M. Young, Reason(s): 1.4 (B/D).

11. (C) Summary: A senior Kuomintang (KMT) official told AIT August 1 that the KMT hopes AIT will help persuade the DPP government to agree to a visit by PRC Taiwan Affairs Office Director Chen Yunlin to attend an agricultural forum in Taipei October 13-18. The PRC has agreed to the KMT plan to arrange an informal meeting between Chen Yunlin and Mainland Affairs Council Chairman Joseph Wu, according to the party official. End Summary.

12. (C) During a meeting August 1 with KMT Secretary General Chan Chuen-po and KMT Mainland Affairs Director Chang Jung-kung, Chang told AIT that the KMT was about to announce that it was inviting PRC Taiwan Affairs Office director Chen Yunlin to attend a KMT-CCP agricultural forum in Taipei October 13-18. Noting that the KMT National Foundation for Policy Research would soon apply to the Taiwan government for permission for Chen to enter Taiwan, Chang asked AIT to help "persuade" the DPP government to approve the visit request. Chang added that he had not yet communicated the KMT plan to anyone in the government.

13. (C) If Chen is allowed to visit Taiwan, Chang continued, the KMT will arrange a dinner event so that Chen and Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Chairman Joseph Wu can meet and talk. The KMT has already confirmed with Beijing that it would not object to an informal meeting between Chen and MAC Chairman Wu, Chang said. Now is an especially fortuitous time for such a meeting, Chang argued. The recent breakthrough on cross-Straits charter flights proves that China is willing to move forward on direct links despite President Chen's current political difficulties. Premier Su Tseng-chang and Vice Premier Tsai Ing-wen have been receptive to expanded links, Chang noted, and President Chen is unlikely to interfere with their efforts to enhance cross-Straits relations given his weakened position.

14. (SBU) Following the KMT's announcement of the invitation to Chen Yunlin, the MAC, responding to press inquiries, said it would consider the request only after it had received an application. When the government turned down a request for Chen Yunlin to visit last year, one important factor was Chen's refusal to meet with officials of the DPP government.

Comment

15. (C) There is clearly some politicking in the KMT approach, which features a high-profile public announcement but apparently no prior low-key coordination with the government.

If the government rejects the visit, the PRC and KMT can blame the DPP for refusing to hold cross-Strait dialogue. If it agrees to the visit, Deep Green supporters are likely to step up their criticism of "Su revisionism" for advancing cross-Strait relations. A Chen Yunlin visit might also attract Deep Green demonstrations. Nonetheless, this is the best opportunity since the DPP came to power in 2000 for a breakthrough on direct, albeit informal cross-Strait dialogue.

YOUNG